



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

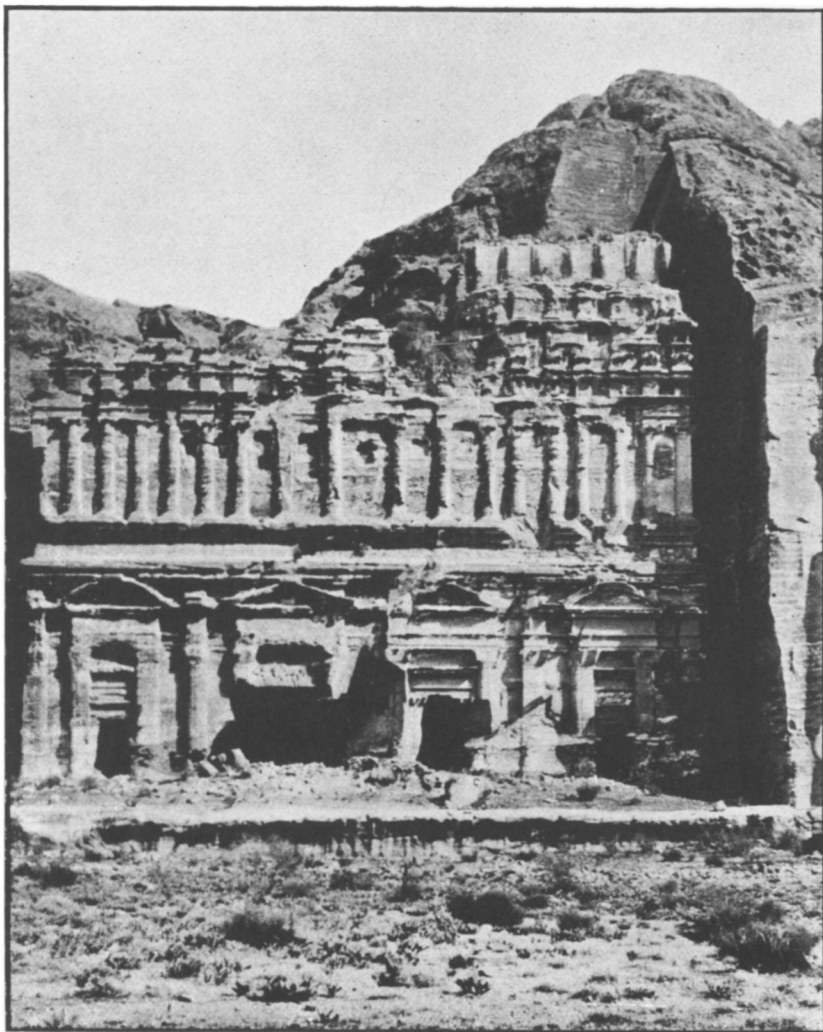
This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



TEMPLE WITH THREE TIERS OF COLUMNS.

BULLETIN
OF THE
AMERICAN GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

Vol. XX

1888

No. 2

FOUR DAYS IN PETRA,

BY

WILLIAM BUTLER OGDEN.

WITH PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN BY MR. WILLIAM H. RAU.

ON the 27th of February, 1882, a party of four of us left Suez for Mt. Sinai, Petra, via the "long Desert." We took the usual route to Sinai, stopping at Wady Feiran two or three days to make the ascent of Jebel Serbal, the toughest piece of mountain climbing I have ever done, and which has forever cured me of going to any place where I cannot ride. But I must say that the view from the top is glorious, extending from Suez and the coast of Egypt on the north and east, to beyond Sinai on the south, and the mountains on the other side of the Gulf of Akaba on the east.

Our party consisted of four Americans, our dragoman, a cook and a servant, and twenty-one Bedawin with eighteen camels to carry us and the luggage. The dragoman, Mohammed Achmet Effendi Hedayah, an Egyptian of Moorish descent, was by occupation a

silk merchant, and only acted in his present capacity when in want of recreation. He had an enormous nose, which was his pride, and I remember that, being near Beersheba, we happened to meet a sheikh who also had a large nose, which so disturbed Hedayah that nothing would do but we must measure the two features. This we proceeded to do with great solemnity, and the result being in the dragoman's favor, he was put in good humor all the day, and in fact long afterwards, whenever he happened to think of it. His greatest failing was his fondness for lying—but, taking him all round, he was an exceedingly good dragoman, and the most likely one to get us into Petra, if it were possible for any one to go there. The mention of Hedayah reminds me of what the late General Stone Pasha said about believing things in the East: "Believe nothing at all that you hear, and only one-half of the square root of what you see."

The last person who succeeded in making any stay at Petra was the Rev. Dr. Strong, in 1874. From that time till our expedition no one entered the place except a German gentleman and his wife (whom we afterwards saw in Jerusalem), who arrived at seven in the evening and were forced to leave at five the next morning, just two days before we arrived.

Lieut. Conder, R.E., is said to have succeeded in reaching there in 1883, but with this exception it is reported that no one has achieved the visit since 1882.

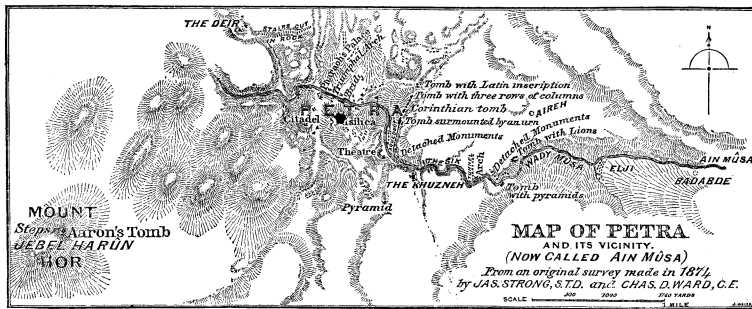
Leaving Sinai on March 13, we travelled in a northerly direction over Nugb Hudua and through the grand and beautiful Wady el-Ain to the Gulf of Akaba, and then by the shore to Akaba, arriving there March 18.

We found Sheikh Mohammed Benjad of the Alawîn Arabs waiting for us.

He is a villainous old fellow, and very avaricious. We found that he had kept the German gentleman and his wife, above referred to, eight days before he would let them have camels, and that they left about two hours before we arrived. After a good deal of squabbling and threats of returning, we managed to get off March 21, going via Wady el-Ithum. On the third day we passed the ruins of Humeimah. They cover a large area, and contain a number of cisterns and tanks for collecting rain water. The principal ruin now is a room, an almost perfect cube in shape, of about twenty feet each way. Just outside is a hole, the size of an ordinary bucket, cut or drilled in the rock, and in it a spring that always just fills it and never overflows or dries up. A little south of Humeimah we passed over one of the battle-fields of Ibrahim Pasha, where cannon-balls and iron bullets lay on the ground in great numbers.

On March 24 we camped at Ain Dalagha, Petra being from about thirteen to fifteen hours distant. It is necessary to camp so far from Petra in order not to be molested by the Fellahîn, or farmer-Arabs who infest the valleys adjacent to Petra, and take to the highway on the slightest provocation, or more truthfully said, perhaps, on none at all. Here we sent forward a scout to inform the Bedawîn that we were to enter Petra, and that they must come and protect us from the Fellahîn. It seems that the Sheikh of this tribe of Bedawîn, Selim, who is one of the most powerful chiefs west, or rather south of the Jordan, was at one time in Hebron, and so careless was he that he was arrested for murder and rob-

bery ; whereupon our dragoman, with an eye to business, most likely, went bail for him and he was released. The notice having been sent, we were up, had breakfast and were off at half past three the next morning. Being at an elevation of between two and three thousand feet, we found the stream which flowed past our tents frozen over, and there was a good deal of frost on the ground. We reached Ain Musa at about four in the afternoon. The stream which starts at this fountain flows through the Sik into Petra, or, as the Arabs call it, Wady Musa.



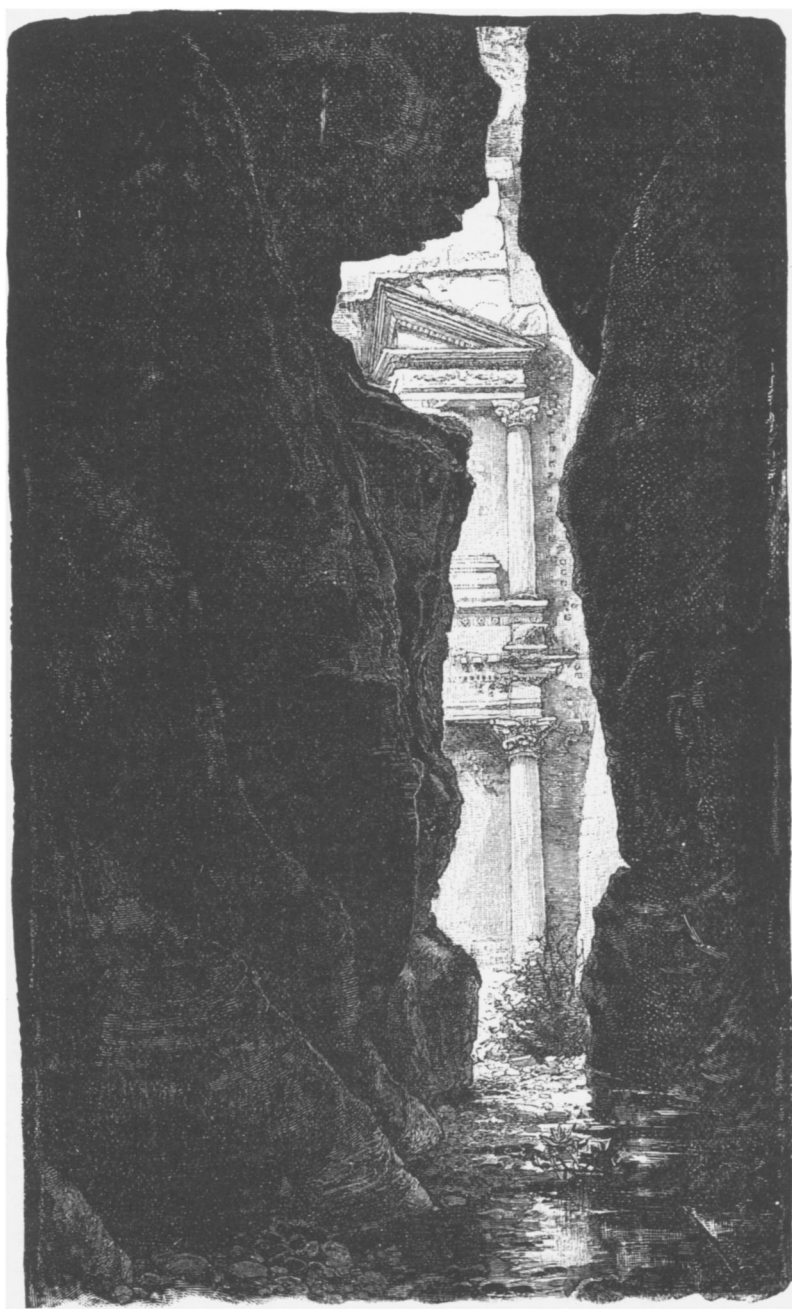
In about three-quarters of an hour we arrived at a few tents and huts called Eljy. Just beyond, on the opposite side of the stream, are a few tombs and monuments, the so-called "Tomb of the Lions" first attracting attention. Its form is that of a square court, hewn out of the rock ; in the centre of the western side or façade is a door leading to the interior, to the right and left of which are small porticoes with Doric columns : the eastern side is made by a wall of masonry, with lions at the entrance. The valley here is about 200 feet wide, and the cliffs are perhaps sixty or seventy feet high. Numerous tombs and openings appear further along on the same

side, but those that most attract attention are three monuments greatly resembling Absalom's tomb in the valley of Jehoshaphat. They are about fifteen feet square, with sides constructed after the manner of the Egyptian tombs and with flat roofs. In one is a small room with a door cut quite low. A few yards further, on the opposite side of the stream, is a monument, the lower story of which consists of a portico of six Ionic columns supporting an ornamented pediment. Above this is a plain façade sustaining, in a recess, four pyramids hewn out of the solid rock.

Another turn of the stream, and we come upon a cleft in the rocks spanned by an arch of masonry, formerly used to support an aqueduct. Now it is almost inaccessible. After passing this the gorge becomes narrower and narrower, and the cliffs higher and higher. We now have to ride in the bed of the stream, which is choked with oleander bushes in full bloom, filling the air with their delicious fragrance. In a little while we come to a small opening, which appears to have no exit except the one by which we entered. The stream seems to lose itself in the rock; but following it we find that it takes a sharp turn around a jutting piece of rock, and that the grandest part of the famous gorge of the Sik is before us. One can hardly see fifty yards in front, and so it is all along. It seems at each angle as if one had run into a cul-de-sac, and must turn back. The cliffs here rise to a height of three or four hundred feet, and they interlock so, that often for one hundred or one hundred and fifty yards at a time the sky is completely shut out from view. It is so narrow that one can easily touch both sides at once with out-stretched arms. On

the left side, going west, is an aqueduct tunnelled out of the rock, perhaps five or six feet from the ground. On the right are the remains of another, at a greater height, made of earthenware pipes let into the rock. In scratching away the stones and gravel underneath the feet, the remains of an ancient pavement are brought to light, deeply grooved by the passage over it of chariot wheels. Every few steps there are niches on the sides of the gorge, perhaps for the image of some god, and there are also tablets with obliterated inscriptions. After an hour or so of walking, we see a glimpse of sunlight ahead; a turn or two of the stream, and we stop and catch our breath from sheer admiration and astonishment at the scene before us: a façade cut from the most delicate rose-pink tinted rock and of two stories, of which the lower one originally had a portico of four columns (one is now missing) but little in relief, and covered by a pediment delicately sculptured with vases and flowers. At either end of the portico is a projection having a column to support a cornice. The columns and the style of the whole building are Corinthian. Above is what appears to be another portico of four columns, but cut in two, and in the central space is a pagoda-like monument topped by a dome supported by four columns with figures in bas-relief between them, and the whole surmounted by an urn. There are figures also in relief between the columns of the divided portico above, and on the side projections in the first story.

Such is the Khasneh Fara'on, and with the bright morning sun shining on the pink rock there is hardly a fairer sight in the world. It gets its name, Khasneh Fara'on—Pharaoh's Treasure—from the urn, which the



FIRST GLIMPSE OF THE KHASNEH FARA'ON.

Arabs believe to be filled with jewels of the greatest value, placed there by Pharaoh for safe-keeping, and guarded by genii. Inside is a vestibule with a door opening into a room somewhat smaller, which has still a smaller one behind it. There are also chambers opening laterally from the vestibule. What its object was, or to what use it was put, is not known.

While we were admiring this building, we became aware of a rumbling noise which grew louder and louder, and we could distinguish most ferocious yells mingled with the clatter of horses' feet on the stones, and finally out dashed ten or a dozen Bedawin on horses and carrying spears twelve to fifteen feet long. It was Sheikh Selim's son Talag and followers, who had ridden far and fast to prevent our getting into Petra; but finding us already there, they made the best of it and proceeded to escort us to our camp in the centre of the city. Talag told us that his father, finding some of his neighbors' sheep attractive, was at present proceeding to add them to his own flocks, and would come to us during the night; in the meanwhile he (Talag) would do all that lay in his power to protect us. The fondness of the Arab for his neighbor's sheep has a good many illustrations in the life of the desert. Two days after our entry we were again standing before the Khasneh and a Fellah passed by with a sheep slung over his shoulder. One of the Bedawin who was with us stopped him, took his burden from him, emptied his wallet of all the piastres it contained, and giving him a prick with a spear, coolly told him to get out; which he proceeded to do with many howls of anger and grief. The Bedawin have as little respect for meum and tuum as the Fellahin,

but they are much more gentlemanly in conveying their plunder. To return to the story: At about half-past five we thought it well to be moving towards camp, and joining our escort we followed the stream into the city. After leaving the Khasneh, tombs appear with increasing frequency and of all styles, from the most elaborate with columns and carvings to the simple doorway cut in the cliff. We passed the ruins of the Tomb of the Greek Inscription, which fell during the rainstorm at the time Miss Martineau was here.

Suddenly the gorge widens to about four or five hundred feet and before us lies the Amphitheatre, having an arena of 120 feet diameter, thirty-three tiers of benches and a row of what might be "boxes" at the top. It is estimated that three or four thousand people could be seated here.

From the centre of this, the view on all sides is remarkable. More than a hundred tombs, temples, or habitations (whichever they may be) of all descriptions are seen. The cliff opposite the theatre first catches the eye, partly because the principal tombs are on that side, but more than that, perhaps, on account of its color or colors. They are in streaks from black, red, pink, green, yellow, blue, purple, lilac and so on, running through the whole gamut to white. Except in that it is a most beautiful object, it reminds one somewhat of Castile soap. The first tomb is the Tomb with the Arched Terrace, sometimes called the Temple of the Urn. The front elevation is composed of four Doric columns, topped by a pediment. In the centre is a door with a window over it, and still above are three more windows in the spaces between the pillars. The middle one of

the upper windows has some figures carved in bas-relief. The inside originally contained six rooms, which, it is said, "on the introduction of Christianity were converted into three for the reception of altars, and the whole temple was turned into a church; the fastenings for pictures are still visible on the walls, and in an angle is an inscription in red paint recording the date of its consecration." The architect cut in from the face of the cliff about fifteen or twenty feet before beginning to carve out the temple. The platform in front is supported by a terrace of two rows of arches, one above the other. The sides are cloistered, as it were, and supported by five columns, but those on the right have been destroyed. Over the pediment is an urn, which has become a target for Arab bullets.

The next tomb of importance, the Corinthian Tomb, is about two or three hundred feet further on. The façade is composed of eight columns, supporting a very deep double cornice surmounted by a pediment. The second story is an exact copy of the Khasneh, with the exception that there are no figures in relief. There are four doors, two arched and two almost triangular. The principal chamber has recesses in the walls and four table-like structures in the centre.

Close by the Corinthian Tomb is the Temple with three tiers of columns (*frontispiece*). It is, perhaps, the largest temple or tomb in the valley. The lower story has four doors with pilasters on either side supporting a pediment over each.

The second story has a row of eighteen Ionic columns surmounted by a similar row; of which, now, only six columns remain. This is all that now remains, but

it is very probable that there was once still another story. In front, traces of paint appear and it is noticed that some of the capitals are fastened on, while it seemed to me that part of the top row of columns had been built of, or filled in with, stone masonry. In the interior there are remains of stucco work.

Next comes the Tomb with the Latin Inscription. The façade is very simple, having only pilasters at the angles, supporting a cornice and surmounted by a pediment. The entrance is small, and above it is an ornament of a semi-circular shape. Here on a tablet are three lines of Latin, containing the name of Quintus Prætextus Florentinus, who was a Roman Magistrate that died in Petra, while governor of Arabia. This is the only legible inscription that has as yet been discovered in Petra.

Just north of here are what were evidently dwelling-houses, for they have windows and there are benches along the sides of the rooms. The Tomb with the Sinaïtic Inscription for some reason or other we were not allowed to visit.

On returning to the camp, we found our tents pitched under the cliffs, a little north of the theatre. A dozen or so of the Fellahîn were standing about, and immediately on catching sight of us, began shrieking and yelling in a most ear-splitting manner. And from that moment till we were well out of the valley, we were never free from those terrible howls. It was only for a short time, about two or three in the morning, that we could hear each other when we spoke in our natural voices. Many times during the day we could not hear ourselves at all, no matter how loudly we called. The

Fellahin kept increasing in numbers every moment, till four days later there must have been considerably over a hundred around the camp, and each new-comer added his voice to the already deafening noise. While we were at dinner some Fellahin tried to get into the kitchen tent, but the Bedawin, who, by the way, were outnumbered four to one, drove them out. The noise increased, and we rushed out to see what was the matter. There stood Talag with drawn sword and flashing eyes, struggling to get at the Fellahin, but prevented by two of his own men. Sheikh Selim arrived at three the next morning with reinforcements. He came in the nick of time for us, for I am afraid that otherwise we should have been driven out. He told us that the German had been robbed by the Fellahin before he reached Petra, had been forced to pay a heavy blackmail when there, and had been driven out at five in the morning, having only arrived at six o'clock the previous evening. A cousin of Selim's, Faras by name, came in in the afternoon, and a more villainous face I never saw on any human being, or reptile. It was not long before he and Selim got quarrelling about the division of the spoils, and but for a remarkably agile dodge of Selim's, he would have had a very ugly looking knife between his ribs. However, it was made up in an hour or so. And so it was all the time we were there; there was fighting and drawing of swords and pistols every few minutes. We never left our tents without a guard of four or five Bedawin, and never for one moment were we free from the spying eyes of the Fellahin.

The cliffs behind our tents were honeycombed with caves and holes. Some of these appear very ancient,

perhaps more so than any of the monuments in Petra ; but otherwise they are of no special interest.

Two or three hundred yards to the west, on an isolated hill, is what Laborde called the Acropolis. The site is separated from the neighboring heights by deep and impassable gorges, and under the conditions of ancient warfare was, doubtless, quite impregnable. Remains of buildings are still to be seen on the summit. Just below it is a mound of rubbish, and I found, by turning up the earth with a broken stick, many broken bits of pottery, and among them two small oil lamps in almost perfect condition. From their appearance I should judge them to be quite old. The pottery is ornamented with figures, mostly geometric, in black or dark brown.

Now turning to the south-east and ascending a hill which rises from the base of the citadel, we see, on the left, the remains of a large temple, one column of which was still in its place in 1874. A little way beyond, several ravines branch out in different directions. Up one of these is a high platform made by a wall stretching from cliff to cliff. This is now in ruins. In the others are many temples and caves. On the left we see a facade with four columns, having between them two windows and three niches with remains of statues. The largest room is about forty feet long by thirty wide, and behind it is a smaller one with arched niches. Opposite this temple is an opening in the rock, and on entering we find ourselves in a large room, the sides of which are ornamented with thirteen fluted columns. Between many of the columns are niches, with grooves over them, for securing, it is said, ornaments or inscriptions.

A little further along is a staircase, with an immense

wall just beyond it. Ascending the stairs we come to a temple built in the Doric style. Continuing to the top, we find several reservoirs, the largest being about eighty feet long, twenty-five feet wide, and about twenty feet deep, all cut out of solid rock. There is also one with a double row of niches in its walls.

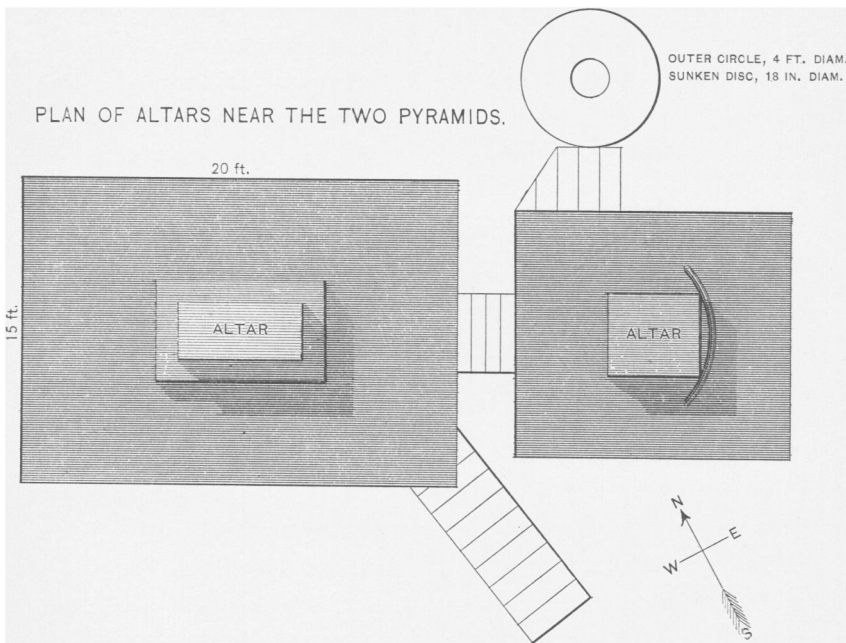
A few rods further and we come to a ravine, on the opposite side of which is a staircase cut in the rock. Following this to the top, there appear the foundations of a large building, which is supposed to have been a fortress. Just below this is the Pyramid, a small piece of undetached rock, about twenty feet high and perhaps twelve feet thick at the base. From here a long stairway leads down to the back of the Amphitheatre.

Looking to the south-west, one of our party, Mr. Rau, I think, saw what he took to be a second pyramid, but smaller and not in such good condition as the first.

This not being mentioned in any of the guide-books, nor in any of the other books on Petra that we had with us, excited our curiosity. So down we clambered, and crossing the gully, found a staircase leading to the top. Once there we found it to be levelled off, and a space about twenty feet long and fifteen feet wide cut out of the rock to the depth of about ten or twelve inches. In the centre of this is a raised platform, upon which is an altar. To the east of this, up four steps, is a raised platform on which is another altar, with a gutter around half of it. To the left of this last altar are four more steps, on mounting which we came upon a curious place, like a saucer in shape, nearly four feet in diameter, having a sunken disc of about eighteen inches diameter in the centre. Through the centre of this disc is drilled a

hole or drain, leading to a tank some few feet away. We supposed it might be one of the altars of Ba'al, perhaps, as it is well known that they used to build these altars in "high places."

Starting from our tents and walking towards the Acropolis, we come to the ruins of what was once a tem-



ple, but now its columns and its walls lie where they fell. Beyond are remains of a pavement leading through the débris of a Triumphal Arch to the Kasr Fara'on, Pharaoh's Palace. This building, with its columns of granite, is completely in ruins.

The last morning of our stay we went up to look at the Deir or "convent." The path up to it is very wild and steep, and in many places so narrow that it would

be impossible to pass but for steps cut out of the side of the rock. The Deir is 1,500 feet above Petra, and about an hour and a half's walk distant. After a final steep ascent we landed on a space about 150 feet square, level, and formed by cutting away the rock. On the northern side is an immense monolithic temple. That is the Deir. The façade is about 150 feet wide, by a little more than that in height, and faces Mt. Hor. The lower story has eight columns, and between the two outside columns at either end are niches like false windows. These columns are over seven feet in diameter and fifty feet in height. The interior consists of a large hall with an arched niche at the back. The upper story is somewhat similar in design to the Khasneh.

Directly opposite the Deir is another high cliff with remains of temples built there.

Returning from the Deir we met our camels at the Kasr Fara'on and proceeded to leave Petra. In about ten minutes we passed an unfinished temple, which tells how the Petrans worked, by commencing at the top and working downward. Sheikh Selim and about fifteen of his men, and twenty or twenty-five Fellahin, escorted us through the "Nugb" or pass. As we were taking leave of them, our Bedawin had a fight with the others, and I see by my note-book that "no harm was done, except that Hedayah got a sabre cut on his leg that ruined his breeches." We had two more fights before we were done with them, and although a good deal of ball and powder was spent, it resulted in nothing but a broken head for them and one prisoner for us. We had now to pass through a hostile country, which we did safely, and arrived at Jerusalem in time for the ceremonies of Holy Week.



THE KHASNEH FARA'ON.



AN UNFINISHED TEMPLE.